



A WARM START TO THE YEAR

I hope everyone had a great Christmas with family and friends and we wish you all a happy and healthy new year!

We commonly see a rise in calf pneumonia and diarrhoea at this time of year. Risk factors are farm specific and include increased humidity in sheds, pressure on stocking density/shared airspaces and the effects of the cold on stress/immunity.

Calves less than 3 weeks of age are the most vulnerable to changes in temperatures. A newborn calf will need extra energy to keep warm below 9°C with no draught. In severely draughty sheds newborn calves will need extra energy to keep warm below 17°C. Calves of one month and over are much more resilient.

As a rule, it is recommended to feed an extra 50g of milk replacer or 0.33l of whole milk per day for each 5°C drop below 15°C.



Calf jackets will also help reduce the effect of the cold in younger calves but it is important that they are washed at 60°C between calves to reduce the spread of diarrhoea pathogens such as Cryptosporidium.

Bedding also makes a big difference in the winter months; young calves should be able to nest in straw so that the back leg is not visible when they are lying down. Bedding should also be dry - a quick way to test this is to kneel down and check your knees remain dry.

/ Rob

NEW: DEFRA ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE PATHWAY

Would you welcome the opportunity to discuss animal health with your vet **free of charge**?

Defra launch a new Animal Health and Welfare Pathway scheme in January 2023 and this gives you a chance to do just this.

You will need to register once the scheme launches. We can then come and walk the farm and inspect stock, or sit down and review records and issues.

We will need to carry out a BVD assessment for cattle farms and worm resistance testing for sheep but these costs are covered.

The only downside we can see is that you may have your vet bill before you receive funding, but with funding of up to £522 per farm this is a great opportunity. Farms must be of a minimum 10 cattle and 20 sheep.

Please contact Charlotte in the office to register your interest.

LAST FEW SPACES AVAILABLE: BOOK NOW!



SHEPTON TOP 10 UDDER HEALTH & MILK QUALITY

MONDAY 16TH JAN @ 7.30PM
PILTON WORKING MANS CLUB

Have you booked your place at our second 'Shepton Top 10' discussion group?

Join us for supper and a discussion about milk quality, reducing mastitis and how you can improve metrics on your farm.

There are limited spaces available so please call us on 01749 341 761 to confirm your place and let us know of any dietary requirements.

OUT ON THE FARM



(1) Bibby and Harry castrated a donkey called Prince - the surgery was performed under general anaesthetic, went smoothly and Prince has been doing well ever since. (2) Bibby also castrated Wally the Alpaca - who didn't seem to hold a grudge as he came to say hello when she went back to check on him!

(3) Alex had a busy day PDing this suckler herd and was delighted to find great fertility overall. A small group of cows were selected for a synchronised cycle to allow AI from Cogent due to the fact they were related to the Wagyu stock bull. Usually we may expect 50% conception to a synchronised service so to find 100% of these in calf was great news.

(4) Meanwhile, Charlie came to the rescue when Emily lost her car keys on farm - everyone joined in the search but they were nowhere to be found. The car, meanwhile, was spookily locking and unlocking itself.....Brandishing a metal detector, Charlie soon discovered the missing keys in amongst the herd - who had been locking and unlocking the car every time they trod on the keys!





SHEPTON TOP 10: MOBILITY

Our third Shepton Top 10 session will look at mobility and reducing the impact of lameness in your herd.

Many of you are already working very hard to manage your herds mobility and doing this very successfully, but is there more that we can do?

We all know an individual case of lameness costs on average £180 with treatment costs, lost milk, and increased risk of culling and if the economic incentive is not enough, lame cows pose a risk to our industry's good reputation.

At this discussion group we will look at how we measure a herd's mobility and learn how to monitor this using your farms collected data (mobility scores, treatment records and lesion type).

Using these different measures, we can start to understand herd patterns, the predominant disease type seen on your farm and outcomes of our treatments.



We will look at the most recent evidence into lameness control and how this knowledge can be incorporated into your everyday management.

As with all #SheptonTopTen meetings, we will benchmark our Shepton herds to identify the top performing herds and award a Mobility Champion.

Details of the discussion group are included in this newsletter - we hope to see many of you there. You can also read more about mobility scoring below.

/ Rosie

SHEPTON TOP 10 MOBILITY

MONDAY 27TH FEB @ 7.30PM
PILTON WORKING MANS CLUB

Join us for supper and a discussion about our third 'Shepton Top 10' topic, Mobility.

Farm Vet Rosie Lyle will talk about measuring a herd's mobility and how to reduce the impact of lameness in your herd.

There are limited spaces available so please call us on 01749 341 761 to confirm your place and let us know of any dietary requirements.

MOBILITY SCORING RESULTS FOR THE YEAR AND ADDITIONS TO OUR MOBILITY SCORING REPORTS

The table below is an anonymised summary of the mobility scores done in 2022 for Shepton Vets clients.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Farm A	9.1	9.2	7.3	5.9
Farm B	8			4.1
Farm C	4.6	2.9	3.1	3.4
Farm D	4	7.5	8	4
Farm E		8	7	
Farm F	6	9	7	3.7
Farm G	9	6	5	6
Farm H	11	14	9.5	9.6
Farm I	3			5
Farm J	11	12	15	23
Farm K			6	7
Farm L			6	4
Farm M	5	6	5	5
Farm N	9	10	11	10
Farm O			9	
Farm P	12	19	19	12
Farm Q	5	9	7	5
Farm R		8	7	
Farm S		8		
Farm T		15		
Farm U			12	
Farm V				14

The numbers in the table represent the % of score 2 and 3 cows in the herd at the time of mobility scoring, this is the

prevalence of lameness on each farm when mobility scoring took place.

All these scores have been carried out by Ray Creed and Anna Hewison, our RoMS accredited scorers.

From the colour coding, you can see the best farms (green) have 5% or less score 2/3 cows on farm, next best herds (yellow) are over 5% and less than 10%, amber herds over 10 and less than 15%, whilst red farms have over 20% lame cows on farm at the time the scoring took place.

The results show that for the majority of herds, regular mobility scoring reduces the prevalence of lameness on farm.

Herds that have regular independent mobility scoring done often have very low levels of lameness. Research shows that farmers are good at identifying severely lame cows (score 3 cows) but score 2 cows (those with milder lameness) are less likely to be identified and treated promptly.

Recent work suggest that it is important to target prompt treatment towards score 2 cows if you are trying to reduce levels of lameness in your herd.

Ray and Anna can help you identify your score 2 cows promptly with regular mobility scoring.

When results are reported to you, we now also flag cows that have been lame previously, using a colour coding system where orange cows are repeat cases and were lame at the last score, and red cows have been lame 3 times or more.

We also now report previous scoring results on the template so that farms can see trends in their lameness trends.

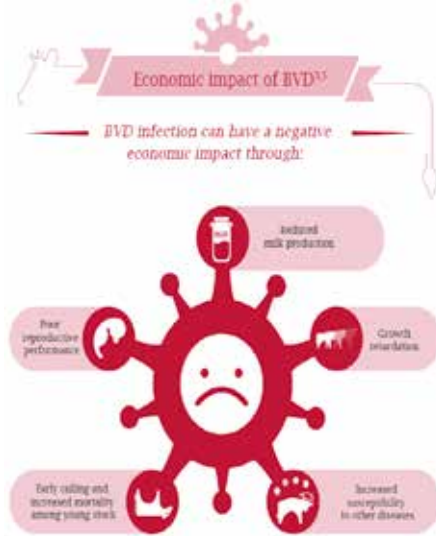
This neat new template can be seen below and was produced by Ray.

/ Anna



BOVINE VIRAL DIARRHOEA (BVD) CONTROL

Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) is a hugely significant disease with major economic impacts for infected herds, as the diagram from BVDzero.com shows.



BVD can cause poor reproductive performance, growth retardation and reduced milk production as well as increased mortality amongst youngstock and susceptibility to other diseases.

As a practice we have been involved with several BVD control projects in the past, with **BVD Stamp it Out** being the most recent. This project ran from 2018 to 2020 and involved 76 of our farms, both dairy and beef. We found exposure to BVD in 46% of these farms and found Persistently Infected animals (PIs) in 13% of herds. We found lots of PI calves but also some adult PI animals in these herds. These

figures show how widespread BVD still is and how important it is to have a good control plan in place.

Control of BVD centers around the **ADAM** approach:

Assess your herd disease risk – what are the risks of BVD coming into your herd
Define your disease status – have your cattle been exposed to BVD

-is there a chance that you might have PIs in the herd

Action plan – find and remove any PIs, -protect your stock from infection through biosecurity and vaccination protocols

Monitor progress – at least annual monitoring for exposure in the youngstock

-regular monitoring in the adult herd, particularly purchased stock

Vaccination forms an integral part of BVD control plans for most herds because of the risks of infection coming across boundaries as well as purchasing stock.

We recommend Bovela for robust BVD protection. This vaccine can be given from 3 months of age and the dose is one injection, once a year for all breeding stock, with heifers being vaccinated at least 3 weeks before they go to the bull. The ability to just give one dose to heifers makes it very easy to follow Bovela vaccination protocols properly and so ensures that you have robust BVD protection. This product has been available for 3 years now and already accounts for half of our BVD vaccine sales - it is just so straightforward to use, which has so many benefits for effective disease control on busy farms.

We also stock Bovilis BVD vaccine. This is an older vaccine and whilst this can still provide effective control and comes in slightly cheaper than Bovela, the dosing regime is very complex to follow accurately, particularly in herds calving all year round. Heifers cannot be vaccinated before 8 months of age and then need 2 injections 4-6 weeks apart to be completed at least 4 weeks before going to the bull. They then need a third dose 6 months later before going onto an annual booster alongside the adult breeding stock. The difficulties in following this dosing regime accurately and the consequences of not following it are not to be underestimated. During our Stamp it Out project we did not find a single farm managing to follow the dosing regime for Bovilis properly. We also found considerable numbers of farms using Bovilis that still had PIs being produced on farm, which means that many of the advantages of vaccination are lost.

BVD control plans need to be straightforward to be effective, but also need to be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that they continue to provide the protection that you need. Talk to your vet next time they are on farm, or give us a call at the practice to book in a BVD review and make sure that your farm's productivity is protected.

/ Lottie

VACCINE OFFER

You can split the cost of Spring vaccine orders placed in January over 3 months. See back page or give Vin a call to order.

COW SIGNALS AND SAFE CATTLE HANDLING

As part of our Herdspersons course, I recently carried out some on farm training with farm staff on safe cattle handling and understanding cow signals with the aim of getting new members of staff up to speed and provide a refresher for those team members who have worked at the farm for a little while now.

The training started with the basics of cattle behaviour - if we don't know normal cattle behaviour, how can we understand how they will react to different environments and different stimuli? Understanding this is essential to managing the risks when working with cattle.



We discussed the fight and flight zone of cattle and how to use this to move cattle safely with minimal pressure and why

stress-free handling is so important.

I demonstrated how cattle respond to people and how moving in front, alongside and behind as well as moving close and far away initiate different but predictable reactions depending on the animal's level of stress.

Using the cow signals principles (observed signs which indicate animal health, welfare, and environment), we established what is normal and therefore learnt that deviation from this is important.

We looked at specific examples such as early signs of illness, bulling behavior, signs of preparation for calving and the logistics of how as a team we communicate these, follow them up and escalate them if needed.

Observation is a key skill for a stockperson both cattle, environment and how they interact and therefore essential the whole team understood the value of making these observations.

Trying to make the training as interesting and interactive as possible, I recorded the team



interacting with the cattle, collecting yards, race and crush using my phone which we reviewed and critiqued later having completed the training. Team training not only acts as a place to share knowledge and practical skills, but as a tool which brings the team together and nurtures a collaborative working environment.

We run a whole raft of farm training and in 2023 we will have a few new courses on offer so keep your eyes peeled. We do offer bespoke farm training too, so if there isn't a course that fits your team's needs, please get in touch.

/ Rosie



MEDS UPDATE & VACCINE OFFERS

Spirovac (Lepto vaccine) has been subject to another delay, with a date now listed as end of January. We have backorders placed but if it is looking like your vaccine schedule will lapse, it may be possible to source alternatives in urgent situations.

Vin will soon be ringing around to take your Spring vaccine orders and you can **choose to spread the cost of orders placed in January evenly over 3 months**. Having BVD, IBR, Lepto and Huskvac dose numbers to hand is useful to get orders secured.

We also have promotions on pour-on wormer and fly treatments for the forthcoming season, so please speak to Vin regarding prices of these products.

MEDICINES DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR



Do you know we can deliver your medicine order? Save yourself some time and let us deliver it all to your farm!

We deliver across the area on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays - it's £5(+VAT) for a one off delivery, or £7.50(+VAT) for the monthly subscription service which gives you one delivery a week. Give our Pharmacy Manager, Vin, a call for more information or to sign up.

Don't forget, you can order medicines at any time of day by text or WhatsApp!

07592 307 394

UPCOMING TRAINING



PRACTICAL LAMBING

WEDS 25TH JANUARY 2023

7-9PM

Join us for this practical lambing course, including:

- caring for the ewe before lambing
- common lambing problems and associated diseases
- practical lambing skills and stop tips using our lambing simulator

Cost £45 (inc.VAT) per person.



APHA APPROVED DIY AI COURSE

WEDS 22ND - FRI 24TH MARCH 2023

Our 3 day APHA approved DIY AI course includes:

- a combination of classroom theory (with the help of our training cow) and on-farm practicals, covering anatomy, fertility management and AI technique including lots of practice passing AI guns through cervixes on our training cow, cadaver tracts and live barren cows
- leads to a licensed AI Certificate and includes a follow up visit on your farm a month later to check progress

We will also be running courses in Mastering Medicines, Foot Trimming, Practical Calving, Cow First Aid, Mobility Scoring and Youngstock Care - watch this space for details!

Booking is essential - please call the office on 01749 341 761 or email training@sheptonvets.com

We can also organise one to one foot trimming training with Charlie and other practical support sessions for your team - give us a call on to book onto a course or for a chat about how we can help with other training needs.



ANNE-MARIE DAVIS

MEET THE TEAM

Name: Anne-Marie Davis / Job: TB & Daisy Bureau Administrator

Where are you from? I'm Somerset born and bred, living just outside Glastonbury.

How long have you worked at Shepton Vets? 5 years.

What did you do before? I worked at B&Q for almost 20 years covering almost every job in the store (apart from Store Manager!)

Why did you want to do this job? After being made redundant, I fancied something different and having grown up on a smallholding all my life, the opportunity came up for me to join the Shepton Vets office team where I could experience first hand and be part of life in a fast-paced vets practise and put my admin skills to use.

What do you like best about it? No day is ever the same - lots of juggling and logistics and you never quite know what call you might get next.

Favourite animal and why? Not sure I have a favourite, but new born lambs in the spring are always joy to see.

Do you have any pets? An African Grey Parrot called Jasper.

Favourite biscuit? Custard Creams

Interesting fact about you? I have taken part in the local carnivals since I was young - even taking part when my mum was carrying me - and both my daughters are now involved too.



Shepton Veterinary Group

Allyn Saxon Drive

Shepton Mallet

Somerset BA4 5QH

Tel: 01749 341 761

Email: farm.animal@sheptonvets.com



Office Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8am - 5.30pm

Sat: 8.30am - 12.30pm

We also provide a 24 hour emergency service